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UNCLAS COLOMBO 001734

SIPDIS

STATE FOR IO/EDA, PRM/POP AND SA/INS  
TREASURY FOR GEETHA RAO  
MANILA FOR USADB

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [AORC](#) [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [PHUM](#) [MV](#) [UNDP](#)

SUBJECT: UNDP AND UNFPA COUNTRY PROGRAMS FOR MALDIVES

Ref: STATE 175157

UNDP program

1. Post endorses UNDP country program for Maldives for 2003-2007. UNDP'S overall objectives of reducing poverty and disparities are in line with national priorities of equitable development identified by the Government of the Republic of Maldives (GORM) in its sixth national development plan (6NDP) and 2020 vision. Although Maldives has seen rising per capita income, the data masks significant disparities in income and development especially in the outer atolls. Therefore, the UNDP's focus on development of the less privileged populations in the outer islands, together with GORM programs and a proposed Regional Development Project funded by the Asian Development Bank, could make an appreciable difference in the lives of people living in atolls.

2. UNDP efforts to improve the focus and relevance of income generating activities through micro credit will also help meet a much needed requirement of the Maldives to find employment avenues for the unemployed.

3. The UNDP resident representative plays a useful and important role in coordinating UN system agencies; UNDP is one of a few UN or international agencies with a physical presence in Maldives.

UNFPA program

4. Post also supports the UNFPA country program for Maldives, which focuses on the following areas: national reproductive health program, access to reproductive health services in atolls, adolescent sexual and reproductive health, inter-sectoral collaboration in population and development, community based initiatives for women's empowerment, and the use of mass media in advocating gender equality. The focus of UNFPA programs is in line with population sector priorities identified by the GORM in the UNDP. In particular, reproductive health programs are vital for Maldives as a large portion of the population is still below 30 and has the potential for a rapid expansion of population. The proposed program deals adequately with Women's socio-economic status.

5. USAID has not been operating any programs in the Maldives recently.

AMSELEM